U.S. Department of Education
2012 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program
A Public School - 12SD1

School Type (Public Schools):
(Check all that apply, if any)

☐	☑	☐	☐
Charter	Title 1	Magnet	Choice

Name of Principal: Mr. Keith Buckridge

Official School Name: Parker Elementary School

School Mailing Address: 330 W. 2nd
PO Box 517
Parker, SD 57053-0517

County: Turner   State School Code Number*: 60-4

Telephone: (605) 297-3237 E-mail: Keith.Buckridge@k12.sd.us

Fax: (605) 297-4381   Web site/URL: www.parker.k12.sd.us

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

_____ Date _____
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*: Mr. Keith Buckridge   Superintendent e-mail: keith.buckridge@k12.sd.us

District Name: Parker School District   District Phone: (605) 297-3456

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

_____ Date _____
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board President/Chairperson: Mr. Allen Merrill

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

_____ Date _____
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

Non-Public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and emailed to Aba Kumi, Blue Ribbon Schools Project Manager (aba.kumi@ed.gov) or mailed by expedited mail or a courier mail service (such as Express Mail, FedEx or UPS) to Aba Kumi, Director, Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Office of Communications and Outreach, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Room 5E103, Washington, DC 20202-8173.

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configuration that includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)

2. The school has made adequate yearly progress each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.

3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirement in the 2011-2012 school year. AYP must be certified by the state and all appeals resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.

4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take foreign language courses.

5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2006.

6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010 or 2011.

7. The nominated school or district is not refusing OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.

8. OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.

9. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.

10. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district   1 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
   (per district designation):   1 Middle/Junior high schools
                                            1 High schools
                                            1 K-12 schools
                                            4 Total schools in district

2. District per-pupil expenditure: 7295

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located: Small city or town in a rural area

4. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 1

5. Number of students as of October 1, 2011 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total			# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	3	1	4		6	15	9	24
K	21	13	34		7	0	0	0
1	14	16	30		8	0	0	0
2	16	17	33		9	0	0	0
3	9	17	26		10	0	0	0
4	11	15	26		11	0	0	0
5	15	14	29		12	0	0	0
						Total in Applying School:		206

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:

1 %	American Indian or Alaska Native
1 %	Asian
1 %	Black or African American
1 %	Hispanic or Latino
1 %	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
95 %	White
0 %	Two or more races
100 %	Total

Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2010-2011 school year: 5%

   This rate is calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

(1)	Number of students who transferred *to* the school after October 1, 2010 until the end of the school year.	8
(2)	Number of students who transferred *from* the school after October 1, 2010 until the end of the school year.	10
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	18
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2010	360
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.05
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	5

8. Percent of English Language Learners in the school: 0%
   Total number of ELL students in the school: 0
   Number of non-English languages represented: 0
   Specify non-English languages:

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: ___22%___

    Total number of students who qualify: ___79___

    If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the free and reduced-priced school meals program, supply an accurate estimate and explain how the school calculated this estimate.

10. Percent of students receiving special education services: ___10%___

    Total number of students served: ___36___

    Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

1	Autism	0	Orthopedic Impairment
0	Deafness	7	Other Health Impaired
0	Deaf-Blindness	7	Specific Learning Disability
2	Emotional Disturbance	14	Speech or Language Impairment
0	Hearing Impairment	0	Traumatic Brain Injury
1	Mental Retardation	0	Visual Impairment Including Blindness
1	Multiple Disabilities	3	Developmentally Delayed

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff	
	Full-Time	**Part-Time**
Administrator(s)	4	0
Classroom teachers	20	3
Resource teachers/specialists (e.g., reading specialist, media specialist, art/music, PE teachers, etc.)	6	0
Paraprofessionals	6	2
Support staff (e.g., school secretaries, custodians, cafeteria aides, etc.)	8	6
Total number	44	11

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the Full Time Equivalent of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1: ___16:1___

13. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Daily student attendance	96%	96%	96%	95%	96%
High school graduation rate	97%	100%	96%	100%	97%

14. **For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools):**
    Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2011 are doing as of Fall 2011.

    Graduating class size: 31

    Enrolled in a 4-year college or university   61%
    Enrolled in a community college   0%
    Enrolled in vocational training   23%
    Found employment   10%
    Military service   6%
    Other   0%
    Total   **100**%

15. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award:

    ☉ No

    ☐ Yes

    If yes, what was the year of the award?

PART III - SUMMARY

The Parker School District is a proud, progressive K-12 independent school. Our strengths begin with our students; they are receptive to the close-knit relationship that their teachers have with them and with each other. This family atmosphere allows for an appreciation of individuality among the students and the staff. Our mission of "Igniting Minds for the Future" drives our educators to see to it that every student is prepared to face the challenges of an ever-changing world. Educators tailor their curriculum and teaching styles to align to the state standards; this understood philosophy provides our students with the differentiated instruction they deserve which enables them to become well-rounded, collaborative citizens for the 21st century world.

Our school has accomplished so much these past several years which makes us worthy of the Blue Ribbon Status. Our success is due largely in part to a dedicated and committed staff who are truly willing to work together to go the extra mile to do what is best for our students. For the past seven years, Parker Elementary has been a Distinguished District. Our school is the only district in South Dakota to achieve this status for seven years in a row. The students' high levels of achievement reflect a commitment to purposeful teaching practices. Over the years, staff members have presented at conferences the various strategies we use for improving student learning and test scores; in addition, the staff members continue to share ideas and expertise with each other at mini-training sessions within our own school. The willingness to share best practices and ideas within and outside our school district demonstrates the quality of excellence Parker School represents.

Parker School, an AdvancED Accredited School with a student/teacher ratio of 16/1 and a 96.5% attendance record, has the reputation as one of the first schools to be contacted by the news media in respect to our technology innovation. Our classrooms are equipped with the latest SMART Boards and curriculum materials. We were one of the first schools to be "wired" for technology as well as one of the first to implement and use SMART Boards in every elementary classroom. The Parker School Board continues to support desired advancements and updates; when funds are not available, administration and staff submit grants. The school has received Senteos, laptop carts, GPS software, Flip Video cameras, etc. by receiving these various grants. In this school year, iPADS are being incorporated into the innovative learning that takes place in the Parker Elementary classrooms. Parker School continues to do everything it can to remain progressive and innovative in all facets of education.

The 2011-2012 school year began with another progressive decision; Parker School went to a four-day school week. The initial reasoning for this was two-fold – to provide students more one-on-one time and to provide the staff more time for professional development. For about three Fridays a month, the mornings are dedicated to providing any needed tutoring or enrichment to the elementary students. Parents in Parker are willing to get their students to school without the availability of school bus transportation in order to keep their children on track and doing well for their academic futures. The afternoons are filled with professional development activities for staff: technology training, project-based planning, curriculum vertical alignment, etc.

Parker, home of the Turner County Fair, is known for its strong community values. This is evident in the pride our community takes in hosting "South Dakota's Oldest County Fair Since 1880." Known as "The Four Best Days of Summer," the fair signals the end of our great, upper mid-western summer and the beginning of the upcoming school year. Thousands attend the fair. Parker residents, a town of one thousand, look forward to the alumni gathering to converse about the great days at Parker School and seeing the new classmates' anticipation of the start of the school days about to begin. The county comes together with its churches and clubs to put together the best features of the oldest county fair in the state – the livestock, the 4H stands, the food stands, the political representatives, the car races, the midway rides; this is just one of the many close-knit traditional times in the community.

Overall, the nature of the community and the school are one. Without one we would not have the other. From the senior citizen center to the pre-school center, the community functions as a village to raise our children.

PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results:

A.   We believe using data is an adept way to determine achievement levels in order to develop strategies necessary to go forward in reaching goals for individual as well as group performance goals. At certain intervals, various standardized tests are used throughout the school year to determine performance levels for reading, math, and science. The test that is utilized for student performance level assessment of reading and math of South Dakota students is the South Dakota State Test of Educational Progress test (Dakota STEP), which is administered to our elementary students in the early spring of the school year. To maintain our high standards, the Parker School educators and administrators consider it acceptable for our students to achieve either proficient or advanced scores in both reading and math. To be a proficient reader is a fundamental skill that affects all learning, so it is understood by the Parker Elementary teachers how vital it for our students to excel in this core skill; in addition, competence in math is essential for success in the 21st century technological job market. Our teachers do this by constantly monitoring our student data and being attentive to the fact that performance levels must be scrutinized to achieve the best from all students. For the Parker Elementary School, the Dakota STEP test has shown a constant trend from the years of 2007 to 2011 in both reading and math demonstrating that on average the test scores of our 3rd through 6th grade students rank in the 92 to the 95 percentile.

B.   Our data tables from Data Interaction for the Dakota STEP test indicate that the Mean Scale Scores on average are in the mid to upper 600s for grades 3 - 6. For the years 2007 - 2011 the reading scores for our 3rd grade students ranged from 633 – 662 and the Mean Scale Scores in math ranged from 656 – 675. The 4th grade students ranged in the Mean Scale Scores in reading from 641 – 667 and in math the Mean Scale Scores ranged from 660 – 684. The 5th grade students in the Mean Scale Scores in reading ranged from 638 – 666 and in math the Mean Scale Scores ranged from 672 – 698. Finally, the 6th grade Mean Scale Scores in reading ranged from 641 – 697, and in math the Mean Scale Scores ranged from 705 – 752. These Mean Scores indicate that a majority of all Parker elementary students score in the Proficient and Advanced performance levels.

Some factors that contributed to significant gains in our reading and math scores were the year-to-year improvement of our teachers implementing our process of scrutinizing data. Parker educators use professional development time to identify students who we refer to as "bubble kids." They are students on the borderline of basic to proficient or proficient to advanced. Once the "bubble kids" are identified their teachers discuss possible strategies or best practices to address the students' weak area(s) in order to extend their learning and improve their achievement. When working with those above and below the "bubble" students, we use strategic intervention to challenge and reinforce their skills. For example, in our *Guided Reading* process, grouped students work through extension activities with their teachers and peers in centers to enhance vocabulary, critical thinking, compound words, etc. In the upper grades, teachers provide open-ended projects. Our reading series, *Harcourt Storytown,* provides *Challenge Masters* which are geared for advanced reading levels. Our "below bubble" students attend Title, Special Ed., Tutor Time, and Friday Help Days for both reading and math; they work in programs such as the *Voyager Program*, a direct instruction lower-level reading program that coincides with the *Storytown Series,* that provides similarly themed classroom vocabulary and spelling skills. Added math instruction has its own supplemental lessons after the original classroom lessons are re-taught. Each classroom teacher keeps records to note the status of each and every student so that a good account of data is not only available to the current teacher but can later be passed on to the next year's teacher.

Another significant factor to performance trends is the committed long-standing loyalty that the professional educators of Parker Elementary, all highly-qualified teachers, have toward their students and their community. There is very little turn-over in the Parker elementary staff; thus, the collaboration of

teachers from one grade to the next helps each next year's teacher understand the ability level of each student and the class as a whole in their capabilities.

Some factors that could contribute to losses in scores would be having only one section in 3rd grade and in 4th grade with a fairly large class of 28 and 29 students respectively. These grades obviously are developmental grades in both reading and math so a slight reduction of scores was noticeable in the two years that this occurred within the years presented in this report. Also, because Parker Elementary does not have a large subgroup of disadvantaged, disabled, limited English proficient, migrant or Title I students, their scores are included in with the other student scores which may be a slight factor in the reduction of the overall Dakota STEP scores.

2. Using Assessment Results:

Parker Elementary staff and administration meet during a professional development "Data Retreat" in order to view and dissect the previous year's Dakota STEP test data for math, reading and science. During this session, we teachers examine each student's current reading, mathematics and science scores with the previous year's scores to determine placement needs in the classroom. This in-service is held at the beginning of each year to prepare teachers for the students they are about to have in the classroom. During this time, teachers collaborate to vertically align their curriculum, discuss the data, and determine the needs of the students; we then suggest ideas and strategies to each other above and below grade levels.

Once the initial Dakota STEP data is disaggregated in the fall, teachers begin examining their own classroom assessment data for performance levels throughout the year. Parker elementary teachers give a pre and post-test to their classroom students to determine gains and losses throughout the year. This online assessment, the *Achievement Series Program*, is a part of the process for the Parker School District to maintain its accredited school district status and was used to deliver the assessment. After the post-test is delivered in the spring, teachers print and submit the data to the administration to be recorded and used for further AdvancED (formerly, NCA) accreditation status. For 2012, however, the *Achievement Series Program* is no longer available to school districts in South Dakota, so the Parker School District staff is learning a new program to acquire the same data for upcoming years.

The Parker School District is fortunate to have access to multiple technological resources; therefore, we classroom teachers have a wide variety of programs to measure individual student achievement. STAR Reading and STAR Math assessments can be given by classroom teachers up to four times a year. These assessments give teachers a Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). In reading, for example, the ZPD score informs teachers of the range that each student can read fluently without frustration. Teachers can use this score to give students assignments that focus on maintaining and improving the ZPD range. These assessments are also used when a new student comes into the district because the scores tell the classroom teacher the range of learning of which the individual student is capable. The STAR reading scores direct the Parker Elementary school librarian to the *Accelerated Reader* (AR) books each student checks out for individual reading assessment. When a Parker student finishes a library book, he or she takes an Accelerated Reader assessment to determine the level of comprehension at which the book was read. These scores are also recorded by the teacher, and individual goals are set by the students as to how many AR points they can earn in a year.

The final assessment tool available to Parker Elementary teachers is the *Study Island* program, is another online program that helps teachers individually assess student data in the subject areas specific to South Dakota's state education standards. A teacher can test a student in a number of ways using the *Study Island* program. Pre and post-tests are the most popular assessment forms for us. The *Study Island* program has designed computer games to help develop students' skills between the testing. However, a teacher can also assign a standardized assessment to test a student's ability in any of the South Dakota state educational standards or Common Core Standards. The *Study Island* program gives teachers the ability to send notifications and share results via email with parents. Students taking the *Study Island* assessments also need to monitor their own data for improvement; teachers can set the achievement level for each individual student in order to monitor and challenge a student's development.

3. Sharing Lessons Learned:

Teachers share on an ongoing basis, but we also share successful strategies with other school districts and professional associations. Various presentations including, "Strategies for Improving Student Learning" to Dakota State University teaching majors, "Strategies for Improving Standardized Test Scores" at an NCA conference in Chamberlain, SD, and "Strategies for Improving Student Learning and Improving Test Scores" have been given to other area schools. Our teachers have served as lead teachers or committee members for SD Math Counts, SD READS, etc. Other area teachers have visited to observe the use of math manipulatives and SMART Board lessons in our math and science classes as well as view the use of iPADs in our elementary classrooms.

Our elementary teachers are constantly attending classes to stay abreast of best practices; thus, final evaluations require presentations within these classes so sharing is also viewed in those cases. South Dakota is progressive in the implementation of technology; classes such as Technology for Teaching and Learning I & II, Summer Symposium, Project Integrate, STAT 21, are just a few that the Parker elementary educators have attended. Many Parker Staff educators have been nominated and included in year-long grant projects in which they learn and share.

During the 2010-2011 school year, our third grade teacher, was involved in Project Integrate. This project incorporated administrators, primary and secondary educators, and state educational service agents (ESAs) in a thorough study and implementation of multi-disciplined, project-based technological strategies. The teacher adapted her classroom material to infuse these Project Integrate strategies. One poetry project used flip cameras, *PowerPoint and Movie Maker* programs. The projects were placed on a wiki site. When completed, the class went to the community restaurant to present their projects. Thus, not only were her colleagues witnessing these strategies but so also were the community members. Overall, she maintained her own grant website to display her lessons and record her data.

Parker administrators nominate teachers to be among groups such as, but not limited to, those writing the South Dakota State Curriculum Standards, choosing Dakota State Test of Educational Progress (Dakota STEP) test questions, and analyzing the Common Core standards. Our teachers have been individually interviewed and observed in their classrooms for their use of programs such as *Study Island*, *STAR Reading*, and *STAR Math* as well as the implementation of iPADs, GPS software, etc.

4. Engaging Families and Communities:

Our staff continues to be involved in community development. This generates trust among the parents, the community members, and the teachers. It is vital to have an open-door policy; it is not necessarily a "strategy" but a "necessity" for all to realize it takes a "village" to raise a child. Our students are well-rounded individuals because our community's theme, "Life's a Little Bigger in a Small Town," encourages individual youth talents. The school often invites community leaders – Police, Fire, Veteran, Medical, Agricultural, Governmental, and Business professionals to provide "real-world" education.

The local newspaper - school news, school newsletters, and the school website are integral to area-wide and local support for the school. The senior citizens love to boast about Parker student successes. Logically, when students have comfortable, consistent, confident surroundings, student success is inevitable. The school/community hold activities such as: hometown celebrations, private pre-school fundraisers, church youth groups, city recreation programs, county fair days, and even individual *4-H* projects which prove to the students, as well as community leaders, grand-parents, and parents, that the common goal is for our students to become happy, successful citizens. Parker staff members have served dinner at the Fall Festival and have run Bingo at Hometown Christmas. The Hearts in Mind Preschool fundraiser is organized by a committee of teachers; Parker teachers direct church youth groups, Parker coaches run summer recreational programs and work at the "Best Four Days of Summer" - the Turner County Fair. Our administrators and teachers are Parker Area Community Club (P.A.C.C) and Parker Development Corporation (PDC) board members.

Whenever there is a family in need, the teachers join forces with other community members to sponsor fundraising events. Thus, helping others demonstrates to our students that sincere support equals true success. The Parker community is a family. It was most evident in September of 2011 when the P.A.C.C. sponsored a community-wide event that invited Governor Daugaard and Secretary of Education Schopp to attend our Distinguished District Celebration. Parker School was the only state school to consecutively rank as "Distinguished" for seven years. County legislators, retired teachers, alumni, as well as all present students and staff, were encouraged to come. Over 800 people attended to show their pride in the students' achievement. Pride runs deep in Parker!

PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

In 2005, the South Dakota Department of Education developed a set of core curriculum standards that every school across the state was to have in place. The Parker Elementary uses those state standards to drive their curriculum. The core curriculum standards provided by the state are split into age groups: kindergarten to second grade, third to fifth grade, and sixth to eighth grade, etc.

Parker elementary teachers spend time on a large number of math standards in their curriculum. Beginning in kindergarten and going through to the senior high level, Parker educators cover algebra, geometry, measurement, number sense, and statistics. For example, a third grade class in the Parker Elementary School will practice the statistics and probability standard by creating a graph based on data gathered by the students of the class.

In the area of reading and language arts, Parker Elementary teachers cover a wide range of writing, reading, listening, viewing, and speaking (LVS) standards. These teachers separate time devoted to reading, spelling, and language as if they were three different curriculum areas. For example, a student in the 4th grade at Parker Elementary school can spend nearly three hours of instructional time each day focused on reading or other language arts core curriculum standards. The commitment to independent reading as a life skill can be seen in middle school/high school students; they desire to continue reading.

The science curriculum for elementary includes lessons supporting life, earth, space, physical, and natural science topics. Science lessons begin in the kindergarten classroom, and as a student progresses into the upper elementary level, the amount of time spent per day on science topics increases. Similarly, students cover curriculum units dealing with American and world history, geography, civics and economics throughout the elementary curriculum. For example, a student in the 5th grade will study a historical figure by reading a biography and then create a "Wax Museum" by dressing up as that historical figure and telling others about that figure's life.

Parker elementary students hold a yearly DECLAM performance where they present a memorized oral reading of a script of their choosing. Community members judge these students during the performance day that students, teachers, parents and community members attend. In the physical education curriculum, Parker elementary students also find unique ways to present their talents for others. Recently, the physical education (P.E.) teacher had a representative of "Dance in Motion" show the students how having fun with dance can also have a benefit to a person's physical health. The elementary students also spend time with the local fitness expert to learn yoga, plyometrics, and aerobic skills. These students spend an average of 50 to 80 minutes a week with the P.E. teacher.

The P.E. schedule alternates with the elementary music schedule, where students see a music teacher for up to 50 to 80 minutes per week. These students hold two evening concerts each year: one in December and another in the spring. The fifth grade Parker elementary students can begin their music careers with an instrument if they choose to do so.

Finally, the Parker Elementary school has a wide range of technology devices and applications available to them. Every elementary teacher has and uses SMART Board technology daily. Students have access to lap top computers in a lab. setting, and the students are beginning to work with iPADS in the classroom. The Parker School District believes that keeping up with innovative technology will help its students prepare for an ever-changing technological world.

2. Reading/English:

Parker Elementary uses a variety of skills and strategies to meet the needs of all students, regardless of ability level. Parker adopted a research-based reading curriculum, *Storytown*, in grades K-5. *Storytown* has a lot of strong features to enhance classroom instruction, including daily phonemic awareness and phonics instruction in the primary grades and a robust vocabulary component across all grade levels. *Storytown* also includes a variety of fiction and nonfiction text options to meet the needs of students reading below level, on level, and above level. Because no single reading program can adequately meet all students' needs, teachers at Parker also include a variety of trade books, leveled readers, and chapter books.

We also value the belief that assessment should drive instruction. The educators use a variety of formative and summative assessments to determine students' areas of strengths and needs to deliver instruction accordingly. These assessments include the program known as the *Developmental Reading Assessment* (DRA) which is a research-based assessment used to determine a child's independent reading level. Within the DRA program, the Yopp-Singer Test of Phonemic Segmentation is utilized to differentiate instruction so this, along with other records and weekly comprehension checks, determine the students' reading performances. If students are struggling, teachers also use a variety of criterion-referenced assessments to pinpoint areas of difficulty and use that data to target their instruction.

Believing in differentiation is the key to student success; Parker elementary educators recognize this key. Teachers individualize student spelling lists to challenge high achievers and to provide success for struggling students. Students are given ample opportunities to read a wide variety of books at their current independent, interest, and instructional reading level with guidance from their teacher when necessary. Teachers use a variety of prompting strategies to help students succeed in reading.

Parker Elementary teachers strive to structure at least 90 minutes of daily reading instruction and practice. Teachers in the first and second grades have adopted the *Daily 5* format, which allows students to be actively engaged in authentic reading and writing activities during the entire reading block. The upper grades provide daily reading during Drop Everything and Read time (DEAR) time. Also daily, struggling students receive Title I services individually and in small groups.

3. Mathematics:

Teachers at Parker Elementary school base our math instruction on the Cognitively Guided Instruction (CGI) philosophy. CGI is a research-based program that builds on the relationship between computational skills and problem solving. Our district has a trained CGI leader who guides our teachers in implementing effective strategies in our classrooms. In applying CGI, teachers spend more time on problem solving and less on memorization of facts and rules. Educators spend a great deal of time observing, listening, and facilitating student learning. Teachers and students work together to ask questions, to develop strategies, and to discover that there are many ways to solve a problem.

While Parker School has adopted the Harcourt Math curriculum, our staff has gone beyond paging through the textbook to focusing on state standards and individual student strengths and needs. All educational objectives come from the South Dakota State Standards (soon to be the Common Core Standards). Teachers also utilize a variety of manipulatives and technology-based instructional tools to maximize student learning. We work as a team to analyze assessment data, to use consistent terminology across grade levels, to ensure that each grade's mathematical knowledge prepares them for the following grade level. All of this helps teachers to individualize instruction to meet students' needs, regardless of performance level.

Parker Elementary utilizes a variety of assessment tools to monitor student learning, challenge high-achievers, and advance the skill level of students performing below grade level. With daily observations, classroom assignments, and online programs, including *STAR Math*, *Study Island*, and *Success Maker*,

teachers have a variety of formative and summative student data. Our teachers use this data to understand the students' individual strengths and needs and to enhance our instructional practices.

With the use of CGI, multiple curriculum resources, and a variety of data sources, we have seen a great deal of progress in student achievement over the years. We have students performing at very high levels and believe this level of success will continue.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

At Parker Elementary, the overall health and well-being of our students is of utmost importance. Having a strong knowledge base of physical fitness, health awareness, and nutrition education as vital life skills helps our students live healthy lives, both now and as they grow up. Staff members, throughout the building, work together to provide a variety of physical, health, and nutrition education programs and activities throughout the year.

Our elementary physical education program follows the South Dakota state standards, as well as *NASPE's Physical Best* program. *Physical Best* is a health-related fitness education program designed to educate all children, promote ownership of fitness and health, and encourage regular physical activity. The goal of physical education at Parker Elementary is to instill a lifetime of enjoyment of physical activity.

Our physical education program also incorporates general education concepts and activities to supplement what the students are learning in the classroom. For example, fifth graders practice their spelling words while working on techniques of basketball passing to one other. Kindergarteners perform locomotor skills (i.e. skipping) to pick up alphabet letters and bring them back to place the letters in order. First graders use math skills to add up the score of various games. To incorporate technology, students participate in games like *Just Dance w*here students dance in a big group through the use of a Nintendo Wii and a projector. The incorporation of technology has been a great asset to our physical education curriculum.

Along with physical education classes, Parker Elementary provides a variety of additional activities to support healthy lifestyles and recognizes the need to help others. Our students participate in *Jump Rope for Heart* and *Hoops for Heart* to understand the risks of heart disease and strokes. Students also reach out and raise money to help affiliated charity groups. Parker Elementary implemented a program called the *Mileage Club*. In this program, students take time to walk during the day to earn links for a keychain. This program teaches our students that walking is a lifelong exercise that allows us to live a healthy life.

To promote good nutrition with our students, the lunch director visits each classroom to talk about the food pyramid and making healthy choices. Each class then plans a healthy lunch that is included in an upcoming school lunch menu. Students enjoy taking ownership of planning healthy meals and understand the importance of making good food choices.

5. Instructional Methods:

Teachers in the Parker School District have been trained in the area of differentiated instruction through staff in-services and other professional development opportunities. The Parker School District recognizes that in order for a student to achieve in the classroom, he or she must have the opportunity to meet certain needs that the district must provide if the student does not receive them at home. For example, the Parker School District has a daily breakfast program that they provide for all students at little to no cost for economically disadvantaged students. That way, all students can begin the school day having eaten a good breakfast, allowing them to function at a higher level in the classroom. The district also has a free or reduced lunch program for the same students.

Parker, South Dakota, is a rural, farming community with a sparse ethnically diverse subgroup. We use curriculum instruction to educate all students on the different populations and cultures of the world in order to create a more tolerant group of citizens. We also recognize that young people from South Dakota

may view words and ideas differently than those of other populations and areas in the United States. For example, an *elevator* to a Parker Elementary student may be defined as a place to store corn or grain, where an *elevator* to an elementary student in a large city, would be defined as a device that can carry a person from floor to floor in a tall building. The use of technology can assist Parker students by allowing them to Skype with people from other locations in order to learn about those cultures. Additionally, elementary students participated in an online webcast with a zoologist who answered questions about penguins and their habitat. Fifth graders also have used ePALS to communicate with students from other countries in order to enhance global communication and learning.

The Parker school's special education population does receive differentiated instruction at the classroom instructional level. Students receive services provided by our special education teachers when it is necessary. An attempt to keep a special education student in the classroom as much as possible is the focus of the teachers. Groups receive help when needed by our Title I and Special Education programs.

6. Professional Development:

Parker school is a data-driven school. We individually and collaboratively analyze data per student so that the students we refer to as our "bubble kids" can be closely monitored. We identify their weak areas and discuss strategies to raise their achievement scores - more importantly their understanding. By studying the data, we individualize instruction and identify curriculum gaps and overlaps that occur from grade-to-grade. In previous years, the majority of in-service meetings involved delving over the State Test of Educational Progress (STEP test) data and district data from programs such as *Achievement Series, Study Island, Accelerated Reader, STAR Math, STAR Reading*, etc.

Besides in-class individualized instruction and further emphasis on core curriculum material for all, Parker School runs a "Tutor-Time" after school program that is available to any elementary student. Classroom teachers encourage the parents to allow their children to attend this program so that they may receive further instruction in needed areas. Secondly, another program known as the Parker Learning Center (PLC) is available during the summer and during the school year. In the school year students come before and after school; following breakfast and/or the after-school snack and recess, the students then partake in enrichment activities.

In 2011-2012 Parker School District adopted a four-day school week. The main emphasis for this was to provide student-help days and staff professional development. Approximately three Fridays a month four hours are designated for student-help time. All students may attend to receive instruction or to compete supplemental learning activities. Because of open communication and cooperation between the parents and teachers, 45.6% of elementary students have taken advantage of these Friday work sessions. Friday afternoons are professional development (PD) time; the teachers analyze data and align lessons to the academic standards. Colleagues pair up to highlight test data and to determine any weak school-wide standards. Curriculum departments, three grades at a time, work together to scrutinize material the others teach so to be sure thorough standard coverage is attained. The overall impact has been successful. State testing follows the submission date of this application; we do not have 2011-2012 state test data to support our Friday work, but feedback from teachers indicates that the Friday help sessions provide positive reinforcement of difficult and/or new concepts. Consistently high test scores show that identifying our "bubble kids" and differentiating instruction has proven that our data-driven professional development is successful.

7. School Leadership:

The leadership philosophy for Parker Elementary is one of an open-door policy. Students, teachers, parents, and other community members feel free to communicate with the teachers and administrators in a mutually respectful manner for the constant betterment of the students. Keeping in mind that "Igniting Minds for the Future" is our mission, the elementary principal provides as much staff encouragement and involvement as possible; thus, the role of the principal is to include the teachers in decision-making situations in relation to scheduling, purchasing, and hiring so that a staff cohesiveness is formed to

provide the one goal of educating the best and brightest students for 21st century challenges. For example, the Friday professional development topics are determined by a committee who represents the elementary staff. Their desire to study data, to research new curriculum, to prepare units, etc. are all taken into consideration.

Policies are also discussed between the principal and teachers during the school year so that teachers' viewpoints are expressed and taken into account since they are in the classrooms and realize the necessary specific policies for proper classroom management.

The Parker Elementary Principal attends conferences to stay abreast of programs such as those previously presented. The teachers frequently request to attend conferences and the principal often provides "leave" time to send teachers for these trainings.

Since Parker is a close-knit community, the principal stays in constant communication with the Professional Educators of Parker (P.E.P), Parker School Board, Parker Area Community Club (P.A.C.C.) and the Parker Development Corp. (PDC). He sees this as a necessity to city planning in hopes for encouraging families to move to our community. In keeping with community involvement, the principal approves outside community events within the school and personally coaches the elementary students in the summer for the Parker Recreation Department.

Overall, the philosophy at Parker Elementary is to collaborate and to concentrate at getting the best results for and from our students.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics   Grade: 3 Test: South Dakota State Test of Education Progress

Edition/Publication Year: 2010 Publisher: Pearson/South Dakota Department of Education

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient Plus Advanced	96	93	96	100	96
Advanced	36	57	36	55	67
Number of students tested	28	28	22	22	27
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	6	2	4	6	8
2. African American Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	1				
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	1		1		
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	2	4	3		3
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. White					
Proficient Plus Advanced	96	93	95	100	96
Advanced	36	57	38	55	69
Number of students tested	25	28	21	22	26
NOTES:					

12SD1

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading   Grade: 3 Test: South Dakota State Test of Education Progress

Edition/Publication Year: 2010 Publisher: Pearson/South Dakota Department of Education

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient Plus Advanced	96	93	96	100	100
Advanced	29	57	41	59	44
Number of students tested	28	28	22	22	27
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	6	2	4	6	8
2. African American Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	1				
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	1		1		
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	2	4	3		3
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. White					
Proficient Plus Advanced	96	93	95	100	100
Advanced	32	57	43	59	46
Number of students tested	25	28	21	22	26
NOTES:					

12SD1

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics   Grade: 4 Test: South Dakota State Test of Education Progress

Edition/Publication Year: 2010 Publisher: Pearson/South Dakota Department of Education

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient Plus Advanced	90	91	100	96	93
Advanced	39	52	48	39	24
Number of students tested	31	23	19	28	29
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	2	6	4	8	5
2. African American Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested		1			
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	5	2		1	3
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. White					
Proficient Plus Advanced	90	91	100	96	93
Advanced	39	55	47	41	21
Number of students tested	31	22	19	27	28
NOTES:					

12SD1

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading   Grade: 4 Test: South Dakota State Test of Education Progress

Edition/Publication Year: 2010 Publisher: Pearson/South Dakota Department of Education

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient Plus Advanced	97	91	100	96	93
Advanced	42	48	42	54	45
Number of students tested	31	23	19	28	29
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	2	6	4	8	5
2. African American Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested		1			
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	5	2		1	3
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. White					
Proficient Plus Advanced	97	91	100	96	93
Advanced	42	50	42	56	43
Number of students tested	31	22	19	27	28
NOTES:					

12SD1

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics   Grade: 5 Test: South Dakota State Test of Education Progress

Edition/Publication Year: 2010 Publisher: Pearson/South Dakota Department of Education

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient Plus Advanced	100	91	90	86	80
Advanced	46	52	43	24	20
Number of students tested	26	21	30	29	30
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	8	3	5	4	5
2. African American Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested			1		
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	1				
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	3	2	2	2	5
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. White					
Proficient Plus Advanced	100	90	90	86	80
Advanced	46	52	45	21	20
Number of students tested	24	21	29	28	30
NOTES:					

12SD1

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading   Grade: 5 Test: South Dakota State Test of Education Progress

Edition/Publication Year: 2010 Publisher: Pearson/South Dakota Department of Education

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient Plus Advanced	92	91	90	93	93
Advanced	42	43	50	31	30
Number of students tested	26	21	30	29	30
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	8	3	5	4	5
2. African American Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested			1		
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	1				
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	3	2	2	2	5
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. White					
Proficient Plus Advanced	92	90	90	93	93
Advanced	46	43	52	29	30
Number of students tested	24	21	29	28	30
NOTES:					

12SD1

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics   Grade: 6 Test: South Dakota State Test of Education Progress

Edition/Publication Year: 2010 Publisher: Pearson/South Dakota Department of Education

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient Plus Advanced	100	100	96	82	92
Advanced	86	62	48	25	24
Number of students tested	21	26	27	28	25
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	1		1		
Percent of students alternatively assessed	5		4		
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	3	6	2	4	3
2. African American Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested		1			
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	1			4	2
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. White					
Proficient Plus Advanced	100	100	96	86	92
Advanced	86	64	50	25	21
Number of students tested	21	25	26	28	24
NOTES:					

12SD1

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading   Grade: 6 Test: South Dakota State Test of Education Progress

Edition/Publication Year: 2010 Publisher: Pearson/South Dakota Department of Education

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient Plus Advanced	100	92	93	96	96
Advanced	19	50	37	54	60
Number of students tested	21	26	27	28	25
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	1		1		
Percent of students alternatively assessed	5		4		
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	3	6	2	4	3
2. African American Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested		1			
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	1			4	2
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. White					
Proficient Plus Advanced	100	96	92	96	96
Advanced	19	52	38	54	58
Number of students tested	21	25	26	28	24
NOTES:					

12SD1

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics   Grade: Weighted Average

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month					
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient Plus Advanced	96	93	94	90	89
Advanced	49	56	43	34	33
Number of students tested	106	98	98	107	111
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	0	1	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	5	0	4	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced	100	94	93	100	95
Advanced	52	41	26	27	38
Number of students tested	19	17	15	22	21
2. African American Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	1	1	1	0	0
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	2	1	1	0	0
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced	63				61
Advanced	27				15
Number of students tested	11	8	5	7	13
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
6.					
Proficient Plus Advanced	95	93	94	91	89
Advanced	49	57	45	34	32
Number of students tested	101	96	95	105	108
NOTES:					

12SD1

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS
Subject: Reading   Grade: Weighted Average

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month					
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient Plus Advanced	96	91	94	96	95
Advanced	34	50	42	48	44
Number of students tested	106	98	98	107	111
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	0	1	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	2	0	2	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced	94	94	93	95	100
Advanced	26	41	33	41	42
Number of students tested	19	17	15	22	21
2. African American Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	1	1	1	0	0
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	2	1	1	0	0
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced	72				84
Advanced	0				7
Number of students tested	11	8	5	7	13
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient Plus Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
6.					
Proficient Plus Advanced	96	92	93	96	95
Advanced	35	51	44	48	43
Number of students tested	101	96	95	105	108
NOTES:					

12SD1